



**ARIZONA READY EDUCATION COUNCIL  
GRADUATION/DROPOUT PREVENTION TASKFORCE**

**February 18, 2014 @ 9:00 a.m.**

**Executive Tower**

**1700 W. Washington**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Conference Room**

**Phoenix, AZ 85007**

**Meeting Notes**

**Members Present:** Cathleen Barton, Rusty Bowers, Dr. Maria Harper Marinick, Diane McCarthy, Mary Murphy, Darcy Renfro, Dr. Amy Schlessman, Kent Scribner, Carolyn Warner, and Dr. Jim Zaharis (telephonic).

**Members Not Present:** Patti Beltram, Dan Brown, Mark Dobbins, Pearl Esau, Marv Lamer, Sam Leyvas, Amanda McAdams, Christine Thompson, Tom Tyree, and Chair Merl Waschler.

**Staff Present:** Rebecca Gau and Brad Schroeter

**Call to Order, Welcome, & Introductions**

Merl Waschler called the meeting to order at 9:18 a.m. provided welcoming remarks and introduced the purpose of this meeting, which was to have a discussion about CTE ABOR Admission, receive updates on White Paper and the GRTF Project, discuss Out-of-School Time Program Standards, and receive an update on the Graduation Rate Research Project.

Quorum was met at 9:37 a.m. with the arrival of Rusty Bowers. Diane McCarthy moved for the approval of the January 21<sup>st</sup>, 2013 Task Force meeting minutes as presented, the motion was seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

**Discussion: CTE ABOR Admission**

Rebecca Gau with the Governor's Office of Education Innovation (GOEI) updated the Task Force on CTE Arizona Board of Regents (ABOR) Admission. Ms. Gau spoke with Stephanie Jacobson and received some ideas, suggestions, and recommendations. Ms. Jacobson's first bit of advice was that once the CTE language-modification conversation is opened, there is no way to tell which way it could go - so it should only be done if other options are available. Ms. Gau informed the Task Force that Ms. Jacobson also suggested that any CTE student can submit a portfolio of their work if they feel that they are not receiving appropriate credit in their class. Though it is not clear if this has ever been done by a student or not, it is certainly on-par with the spirit of CTE programs.

Several Task Force members joined this discussion and offered their opinions and suggestions.

**Update: White Paper**

Ms. Gau presented the Task Force with an update on the 7<sup>th</sup> White Paper. Ms. Gau asked for opinions from Task Force members before acknowledging that there were two members of the public who would like to make comments.

Angie Pogue with MCESA, a member of the public, offered her insight on the issue at hand. Ms. Pogue informed the Task Force that she is working on allowing young individuals who have obtained their GED to have the option to go to high school and earn their high school diploma. At the moment, schools in general do not allow for this, but it is still something that is desired by many. Ms. Pogue also highlighted that fact that some students who are disciplined with out of class or out of school suspension are done so because of offenses such as sleeping in class. This pushes students out of the education system who might have otherwise been able to graduate.

Karen Callahan with Genesis City, a member of the public, also offered her insight to the Task Force. Ms. Callahan suggested that a common theme among drop-outs is poverty. Over 90% of the kids she services are living at or below the poverty level and over 33% are adjudicated. However, in her organization, she has had many success stories with disadvantaged/struggling students. Students that came to her after being denied enrollment at many other schools are now working part time at APS. 21 year old students who came to her reading at the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade level are now excelling in all areas. Ms. Callahan recommends that the graduation rate based on cohort be reconsidered – because schools should not be penalized for registering a 19 year old who can still graduate.

**Update: GRTF Project**

Phillip Brown, a private consultant currently contracted by Lecroy-Milligan, presented the Task Force with an update on to the Graduation Rate Task Force Project. Mr. Brown reminded the Task Force of the purpose of the project, which is to describe the work of the GRTF and provide a list of critical next steps and recommendations for a variety of audiences. Mr. Brown went on to provide a proposed outline of the project document. The Task Force engaged Mr. Brown in a discussion that further detailed information that Task Force members would like to see in the final report as well as suggestions on how to continue the project.

**Discussion: Out-of-School Time Program Standards**

This item was postponed until the next Graduation Rate Task Force meeting due to several members of the Task Force needing to depart early.

**Update: Graduation Rate Research Project**

Update postponed.

**Council Comments**

There were no council comments.

**Call to the Public**

Aside from Mr. Pogue and Ms. Callahan (as introduced earlier), there were no requests from the public to address the Task Force.

**Adjourn**

With no further business before the Taskforce, the meeting was adjourned at 10:20 a.m.